



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-0700
Phone: (202) 260-0996 • Fax: (202) 720-0483 TDD: (202) 720-6382 • Web: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>

Dane Henshall (202) 260-0996

**USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT AWARDS \$22.1 MILLION IN BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT LOANS, GRANTS**
An Estimated 2,500 Jobs To Be Created Or Saved In 37 States And Two Territories

WASHINGTON, September 8, 2008 -- Agriculture Under Secretary for Rural Development Thomas C. Dorr today announced the selection of 71 recipients in 37 states and two territories to receive \$22.1 million in business development loans and grants. The funds are being provided through the Rural Business Enterprise Grant program, the Intermediary Relending Program and the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program.

“These funds represent a continuation of the working partnership between USDA Rural Development and local community leaders to promote business development and create jobs in rural America,” Dorr said. “These loans and grants are expected to create and save an estimated 2,500 jobs by improving economic conditions for rural Americans.”

For example, Community Minded Enterprises of Spokane, Wash., has been selected to receive a \$98,158 Rural Business Enterprise Grant to help businesses expand biodiesel production and demonstrate the viability of oilseed crop production.

In Burlington, Vt., the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College has been selected to receive a \$99,000 Rural Business Enterprise Grant to assist 25 cheese makers. The grant is expected to create 25 jobs. Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative in Allison, Iowa, has been selected to receive a \$300,000 Rural Economic Development Grant to help build a new medical clinic and buy medical equipment. This project is expected to create three jobs and save 124. Community Works in Charleston, W.Va., has been selected to receive a \$750,000 loan through the Intermediary Relending Program to establish a statewide revolving loan fund to assist member organizations with economic development projects. The loan is expected to create 70 jobs and assist nine businesses.

Committed to the future of rural communities.

“USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.”
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The Rural Business Enterprise Grant program provides grants to facilitate the development of small and emerging rural businesses, fund distance learning networks and fund employment-related adult education programs. Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants are provided to electric or telecommunications borrowers to provide economic development and job-creation projects. The Intermediary Relending Program's purpose is to alleviate poverty and increase economic activity and employment in rural communities by establishing revolving loan funds to help finance businesses and promote economic development.

A complete list of the grant and loan recipients is available at:
http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd/newsroom/2008/09-08-2008_rri-rl.pdf.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural residents. Rural Development has invested more than \$90 billion since 2001 for equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. More than 1.7 million jobs have been created or saved through these investments. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA Rural Development's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov> .

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